

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 7345

FOR DEPUTY DIRECTOR BRAY/USIA FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP
SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR TDY ASSISTANCE

1. AS YOU KNOW WE ARE EXPECTING A VISIT BY AMBASSADOR YOUNG (COMING ON THE HEELS OF TWO CODELS) WHO WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY A TRAVELING US PRESS CONTINGENT, WITH THE INCUMBENT HEAVY REQUIREMENTS THAT THAT PLACES ON USIS. THIS IS A PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT VISIT WITH REGARD TO US-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS BECAUSE THE CARACAS STOP WAS ADDED AT THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER FOLLOWING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ. PEREZ TOLD ME YESTERDAY THAT HE ASCRIBES MAJOR IMPORTANCE TO IT. THE SUCCESS OF THE VISIT WILL QUITE NATURALLY DEPEND UPON OUR SUCCESS IN HANDLING THE US PRESS, WHOSE INTEREST IN THIS STOP GIVEN THE BACKGROUND CAN ALSO BE EXPECTED TO BE HIGH. I AM, IN SHORT, SURE YOU SHARE MY DESIRE THAT USIS DO ITS USUAL GOOD WORK IN HANDLING THE PRESS ASPECTS OF THIS VISIT AND THAT NOTHING UNTOWARD HAPPENS IN THIS REGARD OR THAT WE BE BLAMED FOR SHORTFALLS.

2. THE TROUBLE IS THAT WE ARE SERIOUSLY UNDERSTAFFED PARTLY BECAUSE OF SOME DECISIONS USIA ITSELF TOOK A LITTLE WHILE AGO. IO YALE NEWMAN HAD HIS TOUR HERE CURTAILED BY
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A MONTH (WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH ME I MIGHT ADD) FOR A TDY IN PANAMA. HIS REPLACEMENT WILL NOT ARRIVE UNTIL SEPTEMBER. A SECOND INFORMATION OFFICER, WHO WAS JUST TRANSFERRED HERE, DON HAMILTON, HAD AN UNFORTUNATE DEATH IN HIS FAMILY AND SO LEFT FOR THE US THE DAY AFTER HE ARRIVED. HE WILL BE BACK BY THE TIME OF THE YOUNG VISIT, BUT BARELY, AND HE WILL HAVE NO CONTACTS OR PERSONAL

KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL SCENE.

3. TO HELP US IN THIS SITUATION, THEREFORE, I WOULD LIKE TO ASK THAT YALE NEWMAN BE VERY BRIEFLY SECONDED BACK TO US FOR A FEW DAYS. HE KNOWS THE LOCAL PRESS SCENE AND IN PARTICULAR THE GOV OFFICIALS WHO HANDLE THESE MATTERS AND WHO WANT VERY MUCH TO HAVE HIM BACK TO WORK WITH. THUS YALE COULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL, KNOWING ALL THE ROPES AS HE DOES WITHOUT ANY NEED FOR ORIENTATION, ETC. I THEREFORE ASK THAT NEWMAN BE DETAILED HERE FOR APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS FROM AUGUST 10 TO 19. USIS CARACAS WOULD PAY HIS TRAVEL AND PER DIEM. (IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HIM IF HE COULD BE RELEASED FROM HIS PANAMA TDY EARLY NEXT WEEK TO PERMIT HIM TO GO TO LOS ANGELES AND SETTLE HIS FAMILY BEFORE COMING BACK TO CARACAS.) I UNDERSTAND THAT HIS TDY IN PANAMA IS NOT NOW URGENT AND I AM SURE THAT BILL JORDAN (WHO I UNDERSTAND IS CURRENTLY IN WASHINGTON) WOULD AGREE TO EARLY DEPARTURE FOR YALE.

4. ALTHOUGH NOT CONSULTED ABOUT THE CURTAILMENT OF YALE'S TOUR HERE, I DID NOT OBJECT TO IT AT THE TIME GIVEN WHAT SEEMED TO BE THE NEEDS IN PANAMA. IT WOULD BE NICE TO SEE SOME OF THAT BREAD CAST UPON THE WATER COME FLOATING BACK IN OUR TIME OF NEED. I WOULD THEREFORE APPRECIATE IT IF YOU WOULD ARRANGE THIS TDY AS REQUESTED.
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